



Media Advisory

Tennessee Healthy Watershed Initiative

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MEDIA ADVISORY

Tennessee Healthy Watershed Initiative Announces \$750,000 in Funding

Nine Innovative Projects Designed to Protect and Improve Tennessee's Waters

Nashville, Tenn. — The Tennessee Healthy Watershed Initiative announced today its plans to fund nine new watershed improvement and protection projects, with a focus on new innovation and community-based initiatives. More than \$750,000 in funding will support several strategic investment areas of the Tennessee Healthy Watershed Initiative, and the projects will be implemented across the state beginning January 2013 through June 2014.

Launched in August 2011, the Tennessee Healthy Watershed Initiative is the result of a partnership among the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the Tennessee Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the West Tennessee River Basin Authority (WTRBA). The initiative's primary goal is to maintain and improve water resources across the state by bringing together the public, landowners, resource management agencies, and conservation-focused organizations to promote communication, collaboration, and thoughtful water resources planning.

"Today's announcement reflects the initiative's approach to ensure that Tennessee's bountiful streams and rivers are managed to conserve the native species, natural plant communities, and ecosystems found in and along river systems while continuing to meet the increasing needs of our communities," said Gina Hancock, state director for The Nature Conservancy in Tennessee.

"Sharing best practices on the various techniques used to maintain healthy watersheds is a strategy represented in several of these projects, which engages stakeholders to work together to continue protecting and restoring our rivers, while building healthier communities," added Dr. Shari Meghreblian, deputy commissioner for the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.

The applicants and projects announced today include:

East Tennessee

- Hamilton County: Normal Park School - \$98,000 to fund the Normal Park Upper Museum Magnet School's Stormwater Mitigation and Watershed Education Design.
- Hancock County: The Nature Conservancy, Virginia Chapter - \$157,000 for the Clinch Powell Clean Rivers Initiative, including enhancements to the multi-agency coordination for conservation impacts.
- Johnson County: The Nature Conservancy, Tennessee Chapter - \$100,000 for the Doe Mountain Recreation Area Master Plan, including a blueprint for complementary tourist development and water resources protection.
- Knox County: Knox County Government - \$95,400 for the development of the Harrell Road Stormwater Demonstration Park.
- Meigs, McMinn and Bradley Counties: Land Trust for Tennessee - \$45,000 for the HEART of the Hiwassee Initiative.

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Middle Tennessee

- Cumberland, Morgan and Fentress Counties: Tennessee Tech University - \$145,000 to fund water resources planning tools and monitoring procedures for the Obed Watershed.
- Rutherford County: Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency - \$35,000 for the removal of the Brown's Mill lowhead dam on the East Fork of the Stones River.

West Tennessee

- Madison County: West Tennessee River Basin Authority - \$56,000 for erosion mitigation and hydrologic restoration of an urban stream.
- Shelby County: Shelby County Government - \$44,000 for improvements to the Shelby Farms Trails Gateway.

In addition to the nine projects announced today, the Tennessee Healthy Watershed Initiative successfully supported a restoration project for a tributary of Cane Creek near Jackson, Tenn. in Madison County earlier this year, taking it from a channelized stream to a more natural, meandering stream.

Today's projects also join a second effort in Lebanon, Tenn., at the James E. Ward Agriculture Center and Fairgrounds, including implementation of a pervious parking area, rain gardens, wetlands, and other techniques to capture and clean stormwater on site before it enters Tennessee's waters. This site will also be available as an educational facility for Tennessee citizens interested in learning about the benefits of these techniques and how to implement similar efforts in their own communities. A ribbon-cutting ceremony is planned at this particular site December 18, 2012, with details to be announced at a later date.

The Tennessee Watershed Healthy Initiative has completed a three-year operational plan, which includes providing flexible funding for innovative projects across the state; planning for secure funding for the Initiative into the future; and promoting communication, collaboration, and thoughtful water resources planning among a broad partnership of agencies and stakeholders.

To learn more about the Tennessee Healthy Watershed Initiative and for a detailed summary of today's projects and those funded to date, please visit <http://www.tn.gov/environment/thwi/>.

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